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DEPUTY WHIP

BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

FOREIGN RELATIONS

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE



UNITED STATES SENATE

March 9, 2007

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The Honorable Rob Portman
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Portman,

As the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) formulates spending decisions for fiscal year 2007, I would appreciate your consideration of \$242.2 million in federal funding for the Weatherization Assistance Program within the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy.

Weatherization assistance in my state of New Hampshire helps ensure hundreds of low-income individuals each year are able to secure their homes from the elements and help lower their energy bills. There is a concern, however, that there may be a decrease in the amount of federal funding allocated to the Weatherization Assistance Program of some 16 percent from fiscal year 2006 levels. New Hampshire's Office of Energy and Planning estimates that such a cut would result in a loss of nearly \$245,000 for the state of New Hampshire. In turn, this would lead to the elimination of weatherization services for 72 homes during this fiscal year. In addition, a cut of this size would affect New Hampshire's ability to leverage other collaborative funding sources, with a potential reduction of services to another 90 homes.

With heating bills in cold-weather states like New Hampshire continuing to rise, I believe the federal government should not decrease funding for so vital a program. Therefore, for fiscal year 2007, I encourage you to fund the Weatherization Assistance Program at the fiscal year 2006 level of \$242.2 million.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

John E. Sununu
United States Senator

JES:psp